

## The Council of Niaca

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these were the principal ministers and representatives ; the God to whom he had tendered allegiance, here would have been no downcast eye, no blush, ;> marked modesty of carriage, we may suspect, if had been a council of augurs and illumens that Constantine had summoned. In that case the Emperor would have been perfectly at his ease as he advanced up the hall, conscious that he was the supreme head of all the priesthoods represented in his presence, and that he was not only worshipper but worshipped. Then, says Kusebius, after a few introductory words of welcome had been spoken, the Emperor rose and delivered a brief address in Latin which was presently translated into Greek. He expressed his delight at finding himself in the presence of such Council, " united in a common harmony of sentiment," and prayed that no malignant enemy might fail to disturb it, for "internal dissensions in the church of God were far more to be feared than any little or war/\* In well chosen language he explained the overwhelming importance of unity and implored his hearers as \*\* dear friends, brethren, ministers ; God, and as faithful servants of their common Lord and Saviour,\*\* to begin from that moment to discard the causes of dissension which had existed among them and loosen the knots of controversy V the laws of peace." The excellent impression created by this speech was intensified by the next act of the Emperor. On his arrival at Nicæa he had found awaiting him a great number of petitioners addressed to him by the bishops accusing